



Beyond Enlightenment: Buddhism, Religion, Modernity (Routledge Critical Studies in Buddhism)

By Richard Cohen

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The vast majority of books on Buddhism describe the Buddha using the word enlightened, rather than awakened. This bias has resulted in Buddhism becoming generally perceived as the eponymous religion of enlightenment.

Beyond Enlightenment is a sophisticated study of some of the underlying assumptions involved in the study of Buddhism (especially, but not exclusively, in the West). It investigates the tendency of most scholars to ground their study of Buddhism in these particular assumptions about the Buddha's enlightenment and a particular understanding of religion, which is traced back through Western orientalists to the Enlightenment and the Protestant Reformation.

Placing a distinct emphasis on Indian Buddhism, Richard Cohen adeptly creates a work that will appeal to those with an interest in Buddhism and India and also scholars of religion and history.

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Review

'This book has ambitious scope, it explores and critiques Western notions of enlightenment that have structured the study of Buddhism.'

- *Nayanjot Lahiri, Professor of History, Delhi University, India*

About the Author

Richard S. Cohen is Associate Professor of South Asian Religious Literatures at the University of California, San Diego. This is his first book, though he has published numerous articles in such venues as the *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* and *History of Religions*. He is now working on a study of Buddhism and counterculture.

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